DM

UPTOWN, WHERE PEOPLE WITH MONEY SPEND IT...

♪ REMEMBER CHRIST OUR SAVIOR WAS BORN ON CHRISTMAS DAY

I WAS *SURE* I'D GET ALL THE SHOPPING DONE *EARLY* THIS YEAR...

YOU'VE BEEN *BUSY*, FOGGY, WHAT WITH ALL THOSE *JOB OFFERS* TO SORT THROUGH.

♪ TO SAVE US ALL FROM SATAN'S POWER

NO KIDDING. LIKE SOMEBODY DROPPED THEM DOWN MY *CHIMNEY.*

THAT'S A *JOKE*, GLORI. HERE IN *AMERICA* WE TELL THE *KIDS* THAT CHRISTMAS GIFTS COME FROM *SANTA CLAUS.* HE'S THIS BIG FAT *GUY* WHO RIDES A *SLEIGH*--

EVEN IN *IRELAND* WE HEARD OF *SANTA CLAUS*, FOGGY.

SPOSE YOU *HAVE.*

LET'S SEE. TOOK CARE OF *MOM* AND *DAD* AND *CINDY* AND *BECKY*...

NO--

NO-- YE *WON'T*--

GLORI!

STOP HIM-- HE--

OH, WHAT'S THE USE...

HORRIBLE CITY-- HORRIBLE--

--AND WILL YE LOOK AT ALL THESE PEOPLE, THEY DON'T CARE A BIT!

DO YE, DO YE CARE A BIT?

COME ON, GLORI.

LET'S GO FIND A PLACE TO DRY OFF...

TIDINGS OF COMFORT AND JOY

NO. I'M NOT DEAD.

NOT YET.

NOT AS LONG ...AS I KEEP MOVING...

My EDITOR wants something SWEET for the CHRISTMAS EVE edition--something about LITTLE GIRLS and PUPPIES.

And here I am at BELLEVUE.

FORGET what you've heard about BELLEVUE. It's NOT a MENTAL institution. It's a HOSPITAL. Sure, they treat lots of emotionally DISTURBED patients...

...but they also handle more than their share of what we like to think of as SANE cases. Like corrupt COPS--and CHILDREN with HEART conditions.

My name is BEN URICH. I'm a REPORTER. This is my CHRISTMAS story.

HOW'S THE KID?

YOU AGAIN ...TOLD YOU TO LEAVE ME ALONE...

CHRISTMAS EVE--HOW CAN IT BE CHRISTMAS EVE WHEN IT'S SO HOT--

--CHRISTMAS IS SNOW AND FIRE-PLACES AND LOVED ONES AND PRESENTS--

--IT ISN'T THE MEXICAN SUN AND QUAKING FROM HEAD TO TOE FROM HEROIN WITH-DRAWAL--

--IT ISN'T ROBBING A BLIND MAN--THE SECOND I'VE ROBBED, THINKS KAREN PAGE--

--MATT--I ROBBED MATT TOO--SOLD HIS SECRET IDENTITY FOR A FIX--

--AND NOW I NEED ANOTHER FIX AND I NEED TO GET TO NEW YORK AND I NEED MATT TO SAVE ME FROM MEN WHO ARE TRYING TO KILL ME--I NEED MONEY--

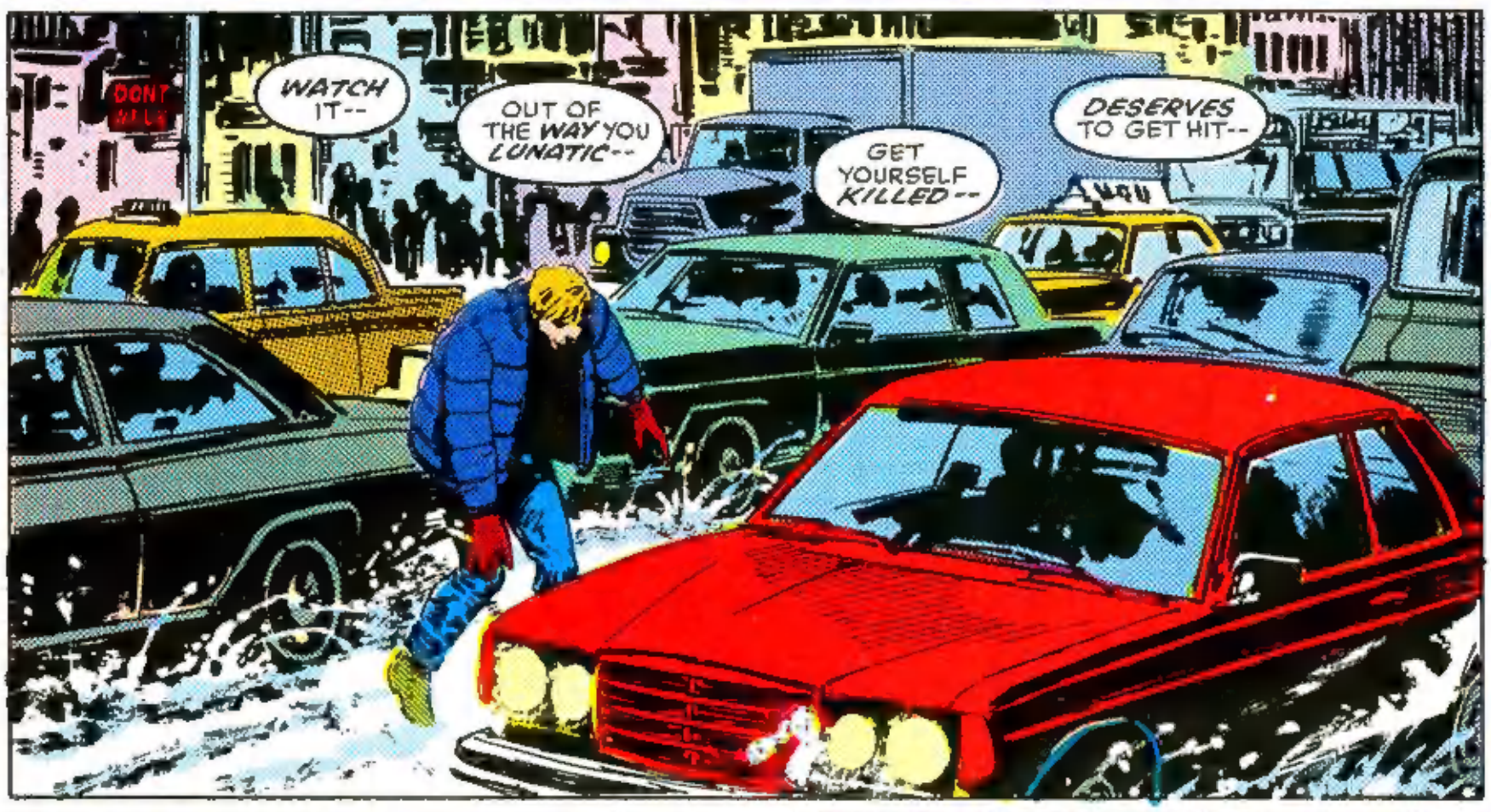
--THE SECOND BLIND MAN I'VE ROBBED--BUT THIS ONE CATCHES ME--

--SCREAMS AND WON'T STOP SCREAMING--

--KEEP MOVING--

--DON'T THINK--

--THE KILLERS CAN'T BE FAR BEHIND--


DONT
WATCH IT--
OUT OF THE WAY YOU LUNATIC--
GET YOURSELF KILLED--
DESERVES TO GET HIT--

OH, MAN--
WHUMPP

HE LOOKS BAD--
JUST KEEP DRIVING, MAN--WHO NEEDS THE GRIEF--

KEEP MOVING...

I MISS YOU TOO, MOM. IT'S... WELL, IT'S MATT-- YOU KNOW, MY PARTNER--OR AT LEAST HE USED TO BE MY PARTNER--HE'S IN A LOT OF TROUBLE. IT'S KIND OF HARD TO EXPLAIN...

...BUT AS LONG AS THERE'S A CHANCE I MIGHT HEAR FROM HIM... I'M GLAD YOU UNDER-STAND, MOM...

...OH, THINGS ARE GOING REAL WELL. I'VE GOTTEN SEVERAL JOB OFFERS... YES, I KNOW YOU SAID I WOULD. ONE IN PARTICULAR LOOKS QUITE GOOD. ALMOST TOO GOOD...NO, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I MEANT BY THAT...

...AND, WELL, IT'S NOT JUST THAT, MOM. YOU SEE, I'VE MET A GIRL... SHE'S REAL NICE...

JEEZ, TURK. I MEAN WE COULD'VE BOUGHT THE SUITS.

WITH WHAT? WE BEEN TAPPED SINCE THE KINGPIN FROZE US OUT OF WORK.

Volunteers of AMERICA

HURRY UP AND GET DRESSED, GROTTO.

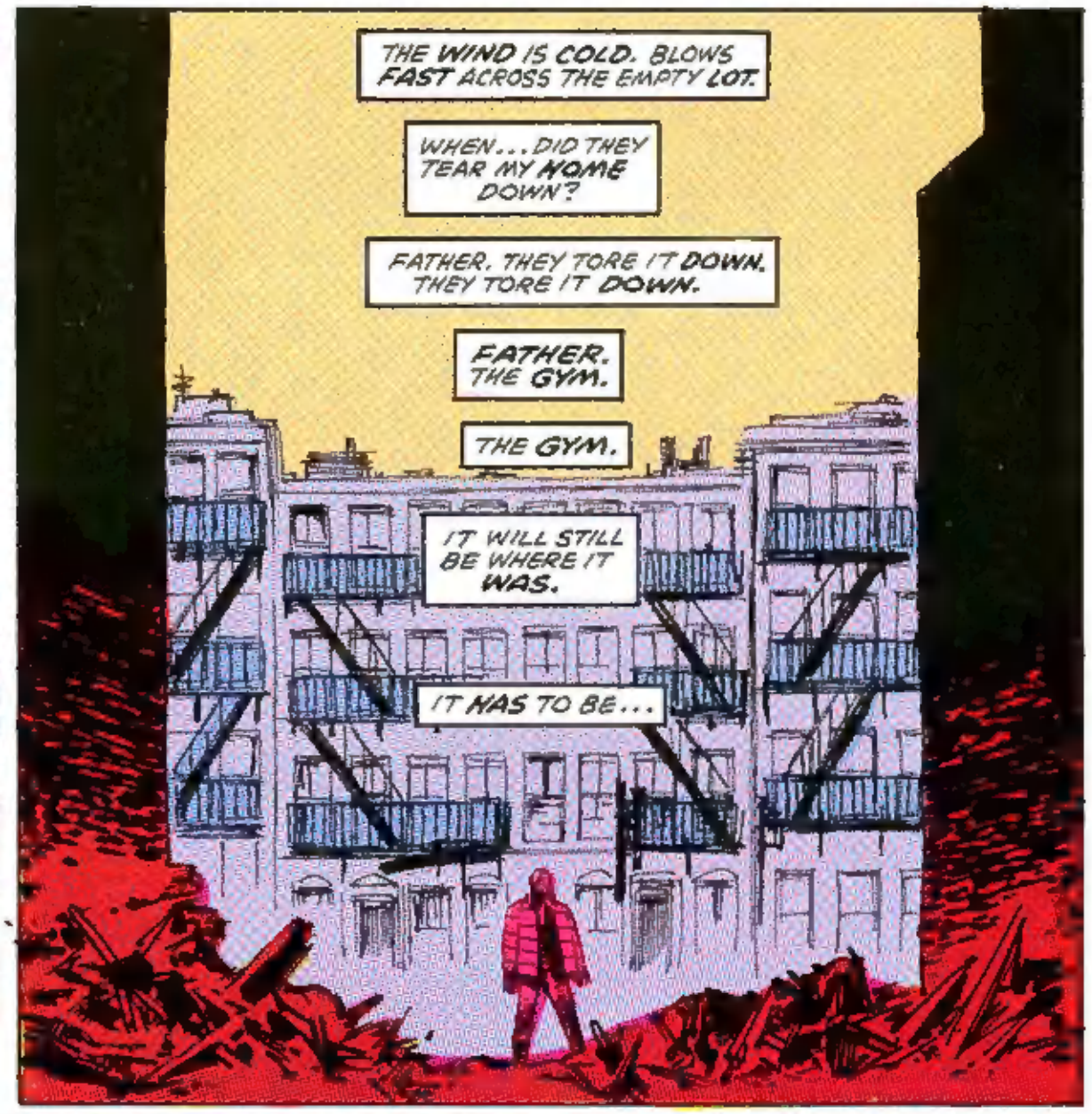
I DON'T KNOW. I MEAN, SANTA CLAUS...

SHUT UP. NOW WE SHLEP TO THE UPPER EAST SIDE. THE RICH ONES GIVE US MONEY--AND THEY FEEL BETTER ABOUT BEING RICH-- AND WE FEEL BETTER ALL AROUND.

IT'S THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT.

TAKE...

...TAKE IT OFF.


THE WIND IS COLD. BLOWS FAST ACROSS THE EMPTY LOT.
WHEN... DID THEY TEAR MY HOME DOWN?
FATHER. THEY TORE IT DOWN. THEY TORE IT DOWN.
FATHER. THE GYM.
THE GYM.
IT WILL STILL BE WHERE IT WAS.
IT HAS TO BE...

The CIGARETTE tastes AWFUL.
It's LIKE that sometimes.
GUESS IT WAS THE KINGPIN THAT MADE THE FRAME. DIDN'T KNOW THE GUY I SPOKE TO.
SOLD OUT. TWENTY YEARS WITHOUT FIXING A TICKET AND I SELL OUT AND IT DOESN'T EVEN SAVE MY BOY.
HEY-- IT'S GOT TO BE OKAY TO SMOKE OUT HERE...

DIDN'T EVEN SAVE MY B--
WHAT IN--
THWAKK

ARE YOU-- AAAA
MR. URICH--YOU ARE CAUSING MY EMPLOYER SOME DISCOMFORT. AND SO MY EMPLOYER HAS ASKED ME TO MAKE CLEAR TO YOU HIS POSITION.
HIS POSITION IS AS FOLLOWS...

...IF YOU WERE A *PUBLISHER* MY *EMPLOYER* WOULD DESTROY YOUR *PRESSES.* SINCE YOU ARE MERELY A *TYPIST* AND IT WOULD NOT BE *PERSUASIVE* TO DESTROY YOUR *TYPEWRITER*--

--MY *EMPLOYER* HAS ASKED ME TO MAKE IT *PLAIN* TO YOU THAT EVERY TIME YOU SPEAK THE NAME *MATTHEW MURDOCK*--

NNGGGG

LJM·1

--YOU SHALL *LOSE* THE USE OF YOUR *FINGERS.*

KRAKK

The WORST thing is that I DON'T pass out.

I get to SEE what she does to NICK MANOLIS.

M·1

IT'S STILL HERE.

*IT STILL HOLDS THE **SMELLS.** ALL THE SMELLS. OF ALL THE **YEARS.***

*THE **SWEAT.** MY SWEAT, FATHER. AND **YOURS.***

*YOU **TRAINED** HERE. YOU **TRAINED** AND MADE ME **PROMISE** TO STAY **AWAY.** SO I **LIED** TO YOU AND **PROMISED** AND CAME HERE **ANYWAY.***

FOGGY'S GYM

*I BECAME A **FIGHTER.** JUST LIKE YOU.*

*ENDLESS STOLEN **HOURS.** ON THE **ROPES.***

*AT THE **BAG.***

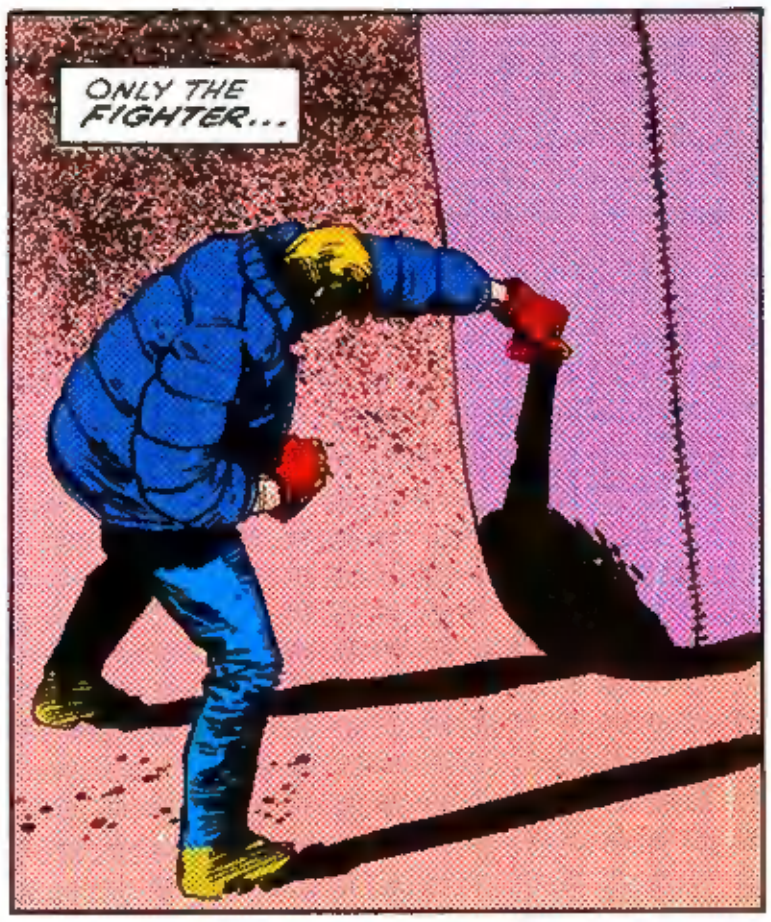
*AT THE **BAG.***

*ON MY MOTHER'S **GRAVE** YOU MADE ME **PROMISE.***

*THE ONLY **JOY** I HAD. I COULD NEVER **SHARE** IT.*

*NOW EVERY OTHER PART OF ME IS **DEAD.***

*ONLY THE **FIGHTER** LIVES.*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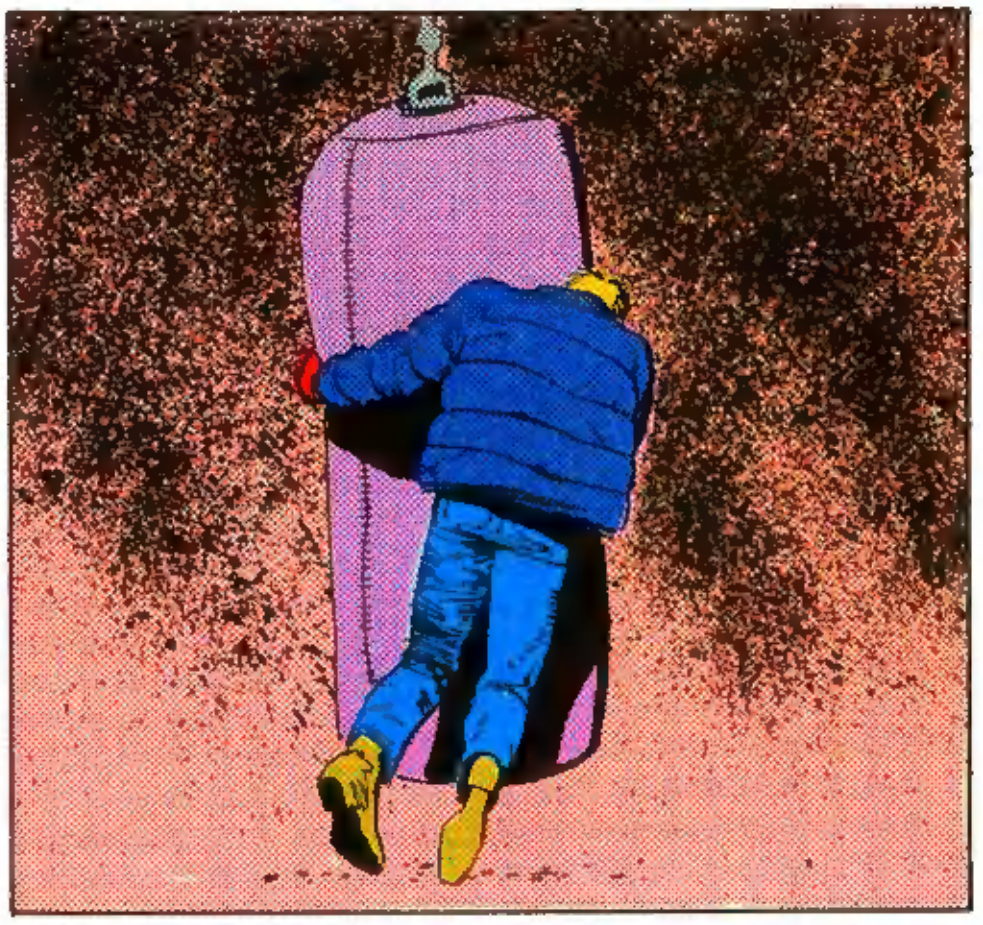
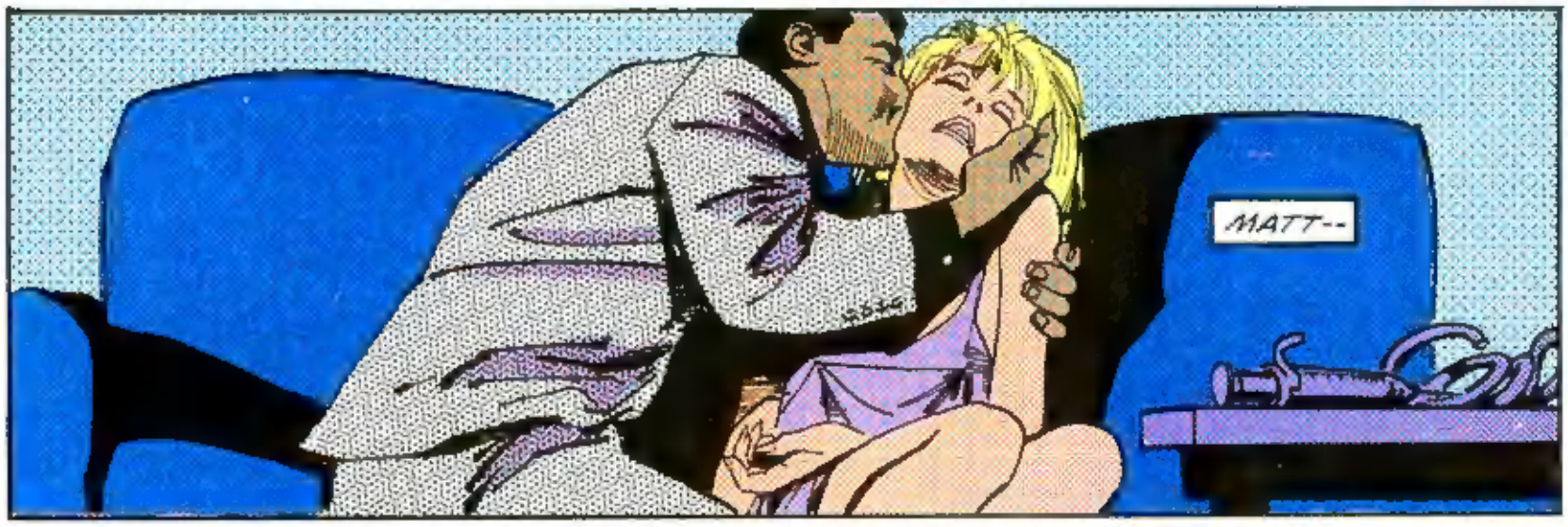
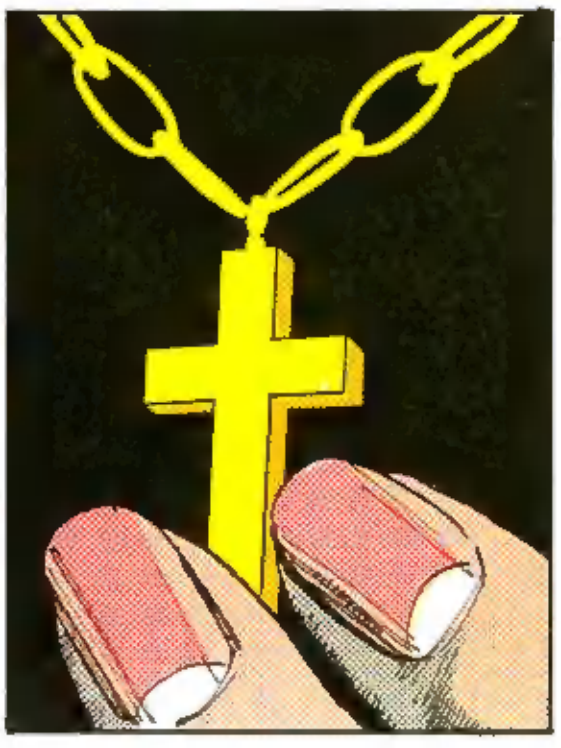



MATT--



MATT.